

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CU-05 OMB-01 OC-06 CCO-00 OCL-00

PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-11

NSAE-00 DODE-00 DRC-01 /102 W

----- 036557

R 231330Z AUG 74

FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2901

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 0697

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, MASS, ET

SUBJECT: AFCC OF THE NORTH

1. FOLLOWING REPORT BASED ON CONVERSATION BETWEEN CONSOFF AND OFFICER ON IMPERIAL ETHIOPIAN NAVY (IEN) STAFF. SOURCE'S RELIABILITY UNESTABLISHED. HE SPOKE KNOWLEDGEABLY ABOUT AFCC OF THE NORTH, BUT DID NOT SAY HE IS MEMBER.

(A) IN DISCUSSING ARRESTED OFFICIALS, SOURCE SAID DEATH PENALTY WILL BE SOUGHT FOR FORMER GOVGEN AND POLICE COMMISSIONER OF WOLLO WHO RESPONSIBLE FOR COVERING UP DROUGHT AND KILLING STUDENT DEMONSTRATORS. HE DID NOT MAKE IT CLEAR WHETHER THIS IS DECISION OF AFCC OR COMMISSION OF INQUIRY. CONSOFF ASKED ABOUT STATUS OF LORD MAYOR OF ASMARA, DEJ. HAREGOT ABBAI. SOURCE REPLIED THAT MAYOR IS CONNECTED WITH LOCAL EXTORTION GROUP AND HAD ACQUIRED OVER ETH. ONE MILLION DOLLARS THROUGH NUMEROUS BUSINESS DEALS SINCE ASSUMING OFFICE OVER A DECADE AGO. SOURCE SAID THAT MANY OF THE ARRESTED OFFICIALS HAVE TRANSFERRED TITLE OF BANK ACCOUNTS AND REAL PROPERTY HELD ABROAD TO IEG/AFCC.

(B) CONSOFF INQUIRED WHAT AFCC'S ATTITUDE IS TOWARD CRITICAL STATE-CONFIDENTIAL

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MENT BY ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (EOC) ON DRAFT CONSTITUTION.

SOURCE DESCRIBED CHURCH'S STATEMENT AS A "REQUEST" AND SAID PRIESTS THAT PREACHED POLITICS WOULD BE DEALT WITH. HE SAID MOST EDUCATED LAYMEN OF EOC AGREED WITH PROPOSED SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE, AND HE DID NOT BELIEVE CHRISTIAN VILLAGERS WOULD RISE UP AGAINST AFCC.

(C) IN DISCUSSING THE ELF, SOURCE SAID THE PLF (WHICH, CONTRARY TO COMMON ASSUMPTION TO DATE, HE APPEARED TO BELIEVE IS THE LARGEST INSURGENT GROUP) HAS NOW CHANGED ITS NAME TO THE ETHIOPIAN LIBERATION FRONT, AND HAS FREQUENT CONTACT WITH, AND HAS AGREED TO COME TO TERMS WITH, THE AFCC. HE SAID THE ETHIOPIAN LIBERATION FRONT HAS BETTER WEAPONS THAN THE 2ND DIV. HE SAID THE ERITREAN LIBERATION FRONT, I.E. GENERAL COMMAND, WHICH IS MUSLIM- DOMINATED, HAS NOT AGREED TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE AFCC. HE SAID THE TWO INSURGENT GROUPS ENGAGED IN PITCHED BATTLE NEAR AILET (OFF ASMARA-MASSAWA ROAD) EARLIER THIS WEEK. CONSULATE HAS HAD CONFIRMATION OF THIS CONFRONTATION FROM BRIGADIER GENERAL GOITOM, COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, WHO ALSO INDICATED TO CONGEN THAT PLF NOW MAJOR INSURGENT ELEMENT.

(D) IN A DISCUSSION OF THE TRANSFER OF TRACT E AT KAGNEW STATION, SOURCE SAID THAT 2ND DIV. HAD OFFERED IEN THE HOSPITAL BLDG. FOR A HQ BLDG. IEN REJECTED OFFER AND IS PLANNING TO USE BLDG S-316 ON TRACT A FOR ITS HQ IF IT DOES NOT GET HQ BLDG ON TRACT E. HE SAID KAGNEW HOSPITAL BEING CONSIDERED AS JOINT OUT-PATIENT HOSPITAL FOR ALL MILITARY SERVICES IN ERITREA. CONSOFF REMINDED SOURCE THAT HOSPITAL INTENDED FOR MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH), THAT USAID HAD TRANSFERRED HOSPITAL CONTENTS TO MPH, AND THAT MPH HAS AUDITING RESPONSIBILITY FOR AT LEAST ONE YEAR.
SHERRY

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Message Attributes

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